

Knowledge  
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Partnerships

# Graduate Case Study

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# Associate Profile: Matthew Knapton

**Name:** Matthew Knapton  
**Qualifications:** MEng Hons Mechanical Engineering  
**Current Role:** Design and Development Engineer  
**Location:** Leeds

*“KTP provided me with the necessary professional skills required to reinforce my career.”*

## **IN MY KTP I...**

My KTP with Leeds University and WABCO Automotive UK Ltd was a strategic project concerned with the development of an innovative new product for use on emerging hybrid technology vehicles. Specifically, the project focussed on the research and development of tribologically advanced engine components operating in a low lubricant environment. During the project, both novel and traditional materials were considered in a new application, and consequently, a significant amount of testing was required which capitalised on the university's extensive laboratory facilities in this field. Development of a prototype product was the next step, which was critically evaluated at the company's test facility. The key to project success was optimising the resources available from all parties.

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROJECT WERE...**

Immediately, I had responsibility for the management of the project and the respective reputation and relationships of the company and the university. During the project, significant co-operation between Leeds University and WABCO existed, and included liaising with several university project teams dedicated to delegated aspects of the project. I enjoyed meeting the challenges presented by this, and seeing the project benefiting significantly from the end results made it worthwhile for the Partnership.

## **THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A KTP ASSOCIATE IS...**

KTP allowed me to be fully immersed in the technical aspect of the project, while providing the opportunity to have real ownership of the project. Whilst KTP encourages innovation and technical excellence, it also allows the Associate to develop additional skills and competencies, such as project management. The quality and availability of training ensures that you can excel using your strengths and build upon your weaknesses. For me personally, the opportunity to achieve a Masters degree concurrently, without being detrimental to the Partnership, was also a significant bonus.

## **FROM KTP I HAVE LEARNT...**

To become a true professional in your chosen field demands more than just technical excellence. It also requires organisational, managerial and leadership skills and, most importantly, the ability to communicate effectively. As an Associate, this skill is nurtured throughout the project by essential feedback to and from stakeholders – the breadth and scope of the project involved a wide variety of people, from suppliers to customers, and the organisations directly involved in the instigation of the project itself.

## **LIFE AFTER KTP IS...**

Unfortunately, the host company was not in a position to offer me a permanent position after the successful completion of the KTP. However, due to the extra skills and knowledge learnt during the Partnership, including being awarded a higher degree, I was immediately offered several positions and I am now pursuing a career in my chosen field.

## **I WILL RECOMMEND KTP BECAUSE...**

I feel that KTP offers a better option than longer corporate graduate training schemes and conventional graduate postings. KTP gives the Associate the opportunity to pursue excellence in their chosen subject, while gaining managerial and leadership skills demanded by high calibre, innovative, world-class companies.

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